

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Smith's Aerospace Components - Wilkes-Barre

Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center

#### Aerospace Components Manufacturer Uses Lean to Grow

##### Client Profile:

Smiths Aerospace Components regionally operates three facilities, one of which is a contract precision machining facility for aerospace customers located in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. This facility has been in operation for 40 years and presently employs 155 people.

##### Situation:

Revenue growth in the aerospace components business was expected to increase by 20 percent in 2007 and double over the next several years. To manage the anticipated growth, Smiths needed additional capacity. The current location allowed for the development of a new facility; however Smiths' corporate management believed other alternatives to increase capacity should be investigated and asked the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help in achieving its business goals.

##### Solution:

Working with Smith's, NEPIRC identified the first piece inspection process as one source of delays in the production process, leading to lost throughput and additional cost of production. Next, NEPIRC conducted an initial review of the current time utilization for first piece inspection processes and its interface with production to discover the best opportunities for improvement. Based on the discoveries made, data was gathered to assess the impact and risks of procedural changes. After review, NEPIRC worked with Smith's to implement changes focused on a reduction in non-value added waiting time and redundant calibration inspections.

##### Results:

\* Captured \$168,750 in annual cost savings.

##### Testimonial:

"By utilizing NEPIRC's consulting services, as well as their Lean facilitation experience, we have been able to accomplish far more in a shorter amount of time than would otherwise be possible. They have assisted with or conducted many events from Set-up Reduction to Value Stream Mapping of administrative activities. It is my contention that their contributions have been instrumental in eliminating waste and streamlining processes. The most beneficial was the Lean 101 training and simulation program that enabled us to train every employee at our Wilkes-Barre facility. This was by far one of the biggest factors in getting our workforce to accept change. Without this willingness to improve, we would not be a leader in our industry."

Ronald Petrovich, Methods Engineer

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